

which Medicare operates that this is the cost of the program that has to be anticipated.

So if we do not follow those cost estimates by the CBO and we come in with \$100 billion, \$200 billion cut, that is a cut; no way other than that is an explanation of what the Republican plan is all about.

So I caution the seniors not to get confused. What we are dealing with here is a major, drastic cut of the Medicare Program, and the dollars are important, but it is the restructuring of this program that is far more devastating.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. CLAYTON of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. BARRETT], as the designee of the minority leader, be recognized before the designee of the majority leader for 10 minutes, notwithstanding the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

WELFARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. BARRETT] is recognized for 10 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House of Representatives will be considering a bill dealing with the W-2 Wisconsin Works Program. I would like to spend a few minutes talking about that bill tomorrow, because I think it is a bill that is frankly a bill that should not be before the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, when I am home in my district in Wisconsin, one of the questions I am asked most often is, Why cannot the Democrats and Republicans get along better? Why does every issue have to turn into a partisan issue? I think that this issue is an excellent example of a time when an issue that should not be a partisan issue has be-

come one, and it has become a partisan issue unfortunately, and I think unnecessarily.

Several weeks ago President Clinton in his Saturday weekend radio address announced that he supported the waiver request that would be coming from the State of Wisconsin. In essence, he offered an olive branch to the Republicans. He said, I agree with you. What is happening tomorrow is that the Republicans are taking this olive branch, they are breaking it in half, and they are sticking it in the President's eye. They are trying to embarrass him, they are trying not to work together at a time where I think Republicans and Democrats can work together. Again, I think that that is very unfortunate.

I think the people in this body should have a little history of the W-2 legislation that passed the State of Wisconsin. This is legislation that passed the State legislature earlier this year and was sent to the Governor. At that time the Governor of the State of Wisconsin used his partial veto power 97 times; 97 times he lined out parts of this legislation that affected 27 different areas of this legislation. He then took 5 weeks to prepare some waiver requests, and last week he announced at a press conference that he would be delivering these waiver requests to the President of the United States. The following morning, he took the waiver requests to the White House.

That day, I called his office and called the office of the Department of Health and Social Services in the State of Wisconsin, since I represent the district that is most affected in this entire country by the W-2 program. I asked for a copy of the waiver requests. Those came yesterday. It is interesting that those came yesterday, because we are going to be voting on this legislation tomorrow.

Let us get to this legislation, because for the first time that I have been able to discover in the history of this country, we are going to have a freestanding bill and the Congress of the United States is going to grant waivers to a State without any prior hearing, without any public input, without any chance for people who are affected by this program to have any input, to have any recourse with their elected officials. The people who are affected by this program are in essence being told, you are shut out of the process.

Mr. Speaker, this is arrogance at its worst. This is an arrogant misuse of power and it is an arrogant misuse of the process of this institution.

Now, what should happen? Mr. Speaker, tomorrow there is going to be a substitute amendment that is going to be offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KLECZKA]. That amendment is going to do several things. First, it is going to encourage the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services to grant these waivers, but it is going to encourage the Secretary to do so after the public has been given an opportunity to have

their input. That is what normally happens.

What is ironic about this is that this is a situation where the last time a waiver request was granted by a President without this due process, without the 30-day public hearing period, the courts struck it down. They said, you have to have the public hearing. What is happening here is we are trying to circumvent that process. We do not want the people of this country to have the ability to hear and have the legislators hear what they have to say.

The legislation that is offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KLECZKA] is also going to say that this waiver should be granted if the W-2 waiver requests that have been submitted to the President of the United States are consistent with the public representations that the Governor of the State of Wisconsin has made. That is all we are asking.

We are asking two things: First, that the public have an opportunity to have their concerns mentioned; and second, we are asking that the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, who has made representations on this issue, that the waivers are consistent with those representations. I do not see where that is any great disservice to the people who are pushing this waiver.

I would also like, Mr. Speaker, to talk a little bit about the merits of the plan. Welfare reform is something that everyone in this body is interested in. People from both sides of the aisle recognize that the current welfare system is not working. But as we seek to improve this welfare system, we cannot ignore the fact that real people are involved in this system, that real people are the ones that may be hurt if we act cavalierly.

The Governor of the State of Wisconsin said, oh, yes, there are going to be speed bumps in this process. Mr. Speaker, our job as legislators is to make sure that real people are not those speed bumps, and I represent the district in this country that is going to be most affected by this plan.

I would like to point out just a couple of things about this plan. This plan requires women who have given birth to return to work after 12 weeks. I am not going to debate the merits of that. There are people here who think that is a good idea; there are people here who think that is a bad idea. But what it does not recognize is that by pouring literally thousands more children into the child care system in Milwaukee County, it is going to overload the system. The system is not equipped at this time to deal with that.

What is going to happen? These women are going to be given a choice. They are either going to put their children in substandard care, or they are going to stay home and lose their benefits. We are talking about 4-month old babies here who are going to be put in substandard care or their mothers are going to lose their benefits.

Now, that is under the merits. But I do not want to spend all my time on